

Mr. Punch's Competition.

(After a Distinguished Precedent.)

A CARNIVAL FOR THE CURIOUS.

THE RADIUM OF RESEARCH IN THE PITCHBLEND OF PRINT.

A BILLION FACTS FOR A MILLION TRACKERS.

THE Competition organised by *Mr. Punch* is of a quite unparalleled and all-embracing sort. There will be no penalty whatever to the peaceable and well-behaved, there will be little risk of danger (except from brain-fever and writer's cramp), and only an unavoidable amount of discomfort and disappointment. Each of the awards offered by *Mr. Punch* will be paid, under protest, to one single (or married) competitor, the questions being so arranged as to require not more than a lifetime of useful and stimulating investigation.

THE AWARDS.

The MOST SUCCESSFUL Competitor (whatever degree of omniscience his answers may possess—there is no maximum qualification) will receive, at his or her peril, either:

A LODGERSHIP OF THIRTY SHILLINGS per week for One Year, covering all the expenses of a finishing course at any high-class boarding-house in Bloomsbury; or

An Insurance Policy for £50 in money, payable to the Creditors of the Policy-holder.

The following other awards, amounting in the aggregate to a sum which defies all computation, will go to other competitors in order of merit.

The SECOND will be granted a PAYING-GUESTSHIP OF TWENTY SHILLINGS per Week for One Year, tenable in any respectable family in Bayswater; or

A Burial Fee of £10 in money, payable as soon as a post-mortem has been made and the inquest held.

The THIRD will be granted an ALMSHOUSESHIP OF TEN SHILLINGS per Week for One Year, tenable at any Parochial Infirmary; or a commutation of ONE POUND IN GOLD.

The FOURTH and FIFTH will be granted ROWTONSHIPS OF NINEPENCE per Day for One Year, tenable at any Rowton House within the Radius; or a commutation of FIVE SHILLINGS IN SILVER.

The SIXTH, SEVENTH, and EIGHTH will be granted DOSSERSHIPS OF FOURPENCE per Night for One Year, tenable at any East-End Doss-house approved by the Sanitary Inspectors; or a commutation of FIFTEENPENCE IN COPPER.

The TWENTY NEXT will, if approved by General BOOTH, be granted SALVATION ARMY SHELTERSHIPS OF ONE PENNY per Visit; or a commutation of ONE DOZEN TICKETS IN SOUP.

The FIFTY NEXT will be granted OPEN-AIR EXHIBITIONS OF ONE FARTHING per Hour, tenable at any Bench on the Embankment or in the Park; or a commutation of

Being moved on by the Police.

Papers have been prepared, by expert enigmatists, to be answered by the competitors at their own homes (or as near as possible); and each candidate will be allowed the term of his or her natural life for serving the sentence.

The questions, as will be seen from the specimen given below, supply a test of how much a man or woman will stand in the pursuit of an elusive fact.

No one is too young to enter for our competition. A bright infant of either sex will profit in the fullest degree by the opportunities we are offering. We shall then feel

we are illuminating whole lives, from babyhood to extreme old age, with the virtues of hope, determination, energy, combativeness, patience, and resignation.

SPECIMEN QUESTION.

The following question, which, of course, will not be employed in the Competition, has been constructed for the purpose of showing the general trend and animus of those which will be used. The reader to whom it seems very elementary may be reminded that the crux of a question often lies in some small inconcinnity which a careless student might not detect.

Specimen Question I.—A certain day in early spring has for many centuries been dedicated to various forms of practical joking. That this, however, was not the case in the time of a famous personage in antiquity we are justified in assuming from the fact that, if he had been addicted to horseplay, some biographer would have handed the incident down to us. Who was this personage?

Answer.—ALEXANDER.

Explanation of the foregoing solution.

The most suggestive clue here is at the commencement of the paragraph, where April the First is clearly indicated.

Turning to the index entry "All Fools Day," we are referred to Vol. 14,257, p. 202a, where we discover amongst other interesting information that Prince BISMARCK was born on that day.

Following this up, in Vol. 262,177, under his biography, we find that BISMARCK was invariably represented by caricaturists as having a bald head, with just three hairs sprouting from the top. Here we are confronted with the equally inviting alternatives of Trichology and Cartooning; but choosing by instinct the former, we look up the article "Hair" in Vol. 726,001, p. 1996d, and almost immediately light upon the following quotation:—

"Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair."

Pope, Rape of the Lock, Canto ii., Line 27.

We are thus within measurable distance of the goal. On consulting the life of this author in Vol. 1,650,974, p. 43c, we read at once that his Christian name was *Alexander*. The connection is now clear, and we have thoroughly established the fact, difficult as it is to prove a negative, that ALEXANDER THE GREAT was the personage in antiquity in whose time the cult of All Fools Day was unknown.

There are, of course, few private book-collections which can supply the details necessary to elucidate such problems as these. *Mr. Punch* has therefore made arrangements to republish the entire library of the British Museum, now amounting to 2,546,379 volumes, together with 3,752 volumes of the Catalogue-Index. It will not be needful for every competitor to purchase these books outright. They may be paid for in instalments of 20,000 at a time, or the whole may be had on loan, and will be brought round by traction engines on receipt of a postcard. For terms and inquiry forms please address Publication and Steam Crane Department, 10, Bouverie Street, E.C.

PASHLEY'S OPINIONS.—No. III.

WHEN I was a youngster, after I had left school and got to work, I used to go once a week to a harmonic meeting at the Fallowfield Arms Hotel close by where I lived. We had a President, who wore a red sash with a silver motto worked on it over a harp—something about Orpheus it was—and there was a Vice-President in a blue sash with the same badge, only smaller, and there were about twenty members. We were all expected to sing a song or get up a glee or play some instrument, and we smoked clay pipes and drank hot brandy and water.

There were a lot of rules, and fines were collected for breaking any of them. Consequence was somebody was always being fined and objecting to it, and so we had very lively discussions, and very often, when the time came for breaking up and going home, there hadn't been any singing or playing at all, and everybody had lost his temper. Still that sort of thing made the President's position a very difficult and honourable one, and as one of the rules was that the President should always be addressed as "Your Grace," there was usually a hot competition for the post, and all kinds of canvassing and backstairs working for about a month beforehand. When I stood against GAMBLE and RUNCIMAN I was first favourite for a long time, but GAMBLE got it through a mean trick. He gave RUNCIMAN a large order for trousers, six pairs of them, and hinted that it would be an annual thing if he got elected. There was a lot more hocus-pocus of that kind, and in the end RUNCIMAN retired from the contest the day before the meeting and asked his supporters to vote for GAMBLE, who beat me by two votes; and as the Club broke up at the end of that year, "in consequence of the marriage of members and other calamities" (that was APSLEY's way of putting it) I never got another chance.

APSLEY was our funny man. I never knew a chap who could make better jokes, and even when you couldn't quite make out what he was driving at he had a way with him that made you laugh whether you wanted to or not. He was the only man who could do it. I often used to try his jokes at home or in other places, but somehow they never went. APSLEY, of course, had had great advantages. He knew the chairman of one of the big music-halls (this was in the days when every music-hall had a chairman who sat near the stage, facing the audience, with a table in front of him and a little hammer, and called out the turns), and once, when this official was suddenly taken ill and had to go out, he left APSLEY in charge, and everything went off without a hitch.

The fact was, APSLEY had a genius for that kind of business, and there's no going against genius: it's bound to come out and show itself sooner or later. Besides that, he played the banjo like a professional, and you couldn't beat him for hornpipes or imitations of animals, nightingales, cocks, cats on the roof, dogs howling at German bands—it was all one to him. But his funniest turn was a bit he'd invented himself about a man going out to dinner and coming home about two in the morning, and taking off his boots and crawling upstairs on all fours only to find his mother-in-law waiting for him on the landing with a night-cap on and a razor-strop in her hand. You could see the poor beggar crawling, crawling up and up, slipping here and there and barking his shins, but not daring to howl out, and last of all getting up erect when he thought everything was safe, and giving a shriek. Then you could hear the razor-strop going sixteen to the dozen, and I swear it made you rub yourself, till he dashed into his room and slammed the door after him. It was better than a theatre. Of course APSLEY had had lots of offers to go on the stage, but he always said he preferred his liberty.

APSLEY wasn't a married man—fellows like that don't run well in double harness—and he was always down on marriage, most of his songs being about men who got bullied by their wives or abused by their mothers-in-law. Somehow our ladies, didn't like him. Mrs. RUNCIMAN thought him a sneering fellow, and Miss CRUMP said it made her feel cold all over merely to look at his eye. But then women never can see a joke, and they haven't got the smallest appreciation of real humour. I remember trying to tell my mother all about APSLEY's best turn—mother-in-law, razor-strop and all, and she only looked gloomier and gloomier.. At last I said, "Don't you think it's funny?" And all she said was, "No, Josh, I do not, and I'm surprised you should, after the way you've been brought up. You mark my words:—the man who invents and describes such scenes of coarse debauchery will come to no good, and the sooner you give up his society the better for you." Of course I only laughed, and told her that I quite agreed with APSLEY that marriage was a mug's game. I stuck by that idea for a long time, too, but I got changed at last. Another time I'll tell you how it happened.

AN UNAPPRECIATED GENIUS.

["Does the average man, who is content so long as his coat is fairly well fitting and his nether garments show no symptoms of senile decay, realise the amount of thought that is brought to bear upon the question of clothes by the young exquisite, who devotes all the brain he possesses to the consideration of this important matter?"—*Daily Paper*.]

GREAT Scott! And shall mere ordinary men,—

The doctor with his physic and his fee,

The journalist who plies a busy pen,

The merchant or the eminent K.C.—

Shall these, I say, with their plebeian sneers

Look down on me?—forsooth they cannot guess

That I have spent long weary months and years

Achieving my pre-eminence in dress.

What do they know? Their souls are dull and cold;

Can they appreciate what's really chaste?

Their wardrobe by necessity's controlled,

And seldom they dispute their tailor's taste.

Ideas they've none—or of the lowest grade;

The process of selection simply bores;

Their hats and boots they purchase ready made,

And very likely patronise the Stores.

The plodding student burns the midnight oil

And hopes to be a SOLOMON—but oh!

I went through days and nights of endless toil

Ere I could tie a really faultless bow.

The statesman works to win a short-lived fame;

The soldier fights to bring his country peace;

But mightier obstacles I overcame

To keep my trousers in a proper crease.

From mental calculations I don't flinch.

One problem frequently is solved by me,

For I can tell—to sixteenths of an inch—

How wide a modern hat brim ought to be.

Then I have wandered all throughout the West

When Inspiration cast on me her spell,

Until I found a certain fancy vest

That suited my complexion very well.

Talk not to me of politics, I pray,

I have no time for matters so remote;

And if I'm too much worried, well, it may

Result in wrinkles in my shapely coat.

Some day I'll be applauded by the mob

Which now, from lack of education, mocks—

At present I'm engaged upon the job

Of hunting for a novelty in socks.

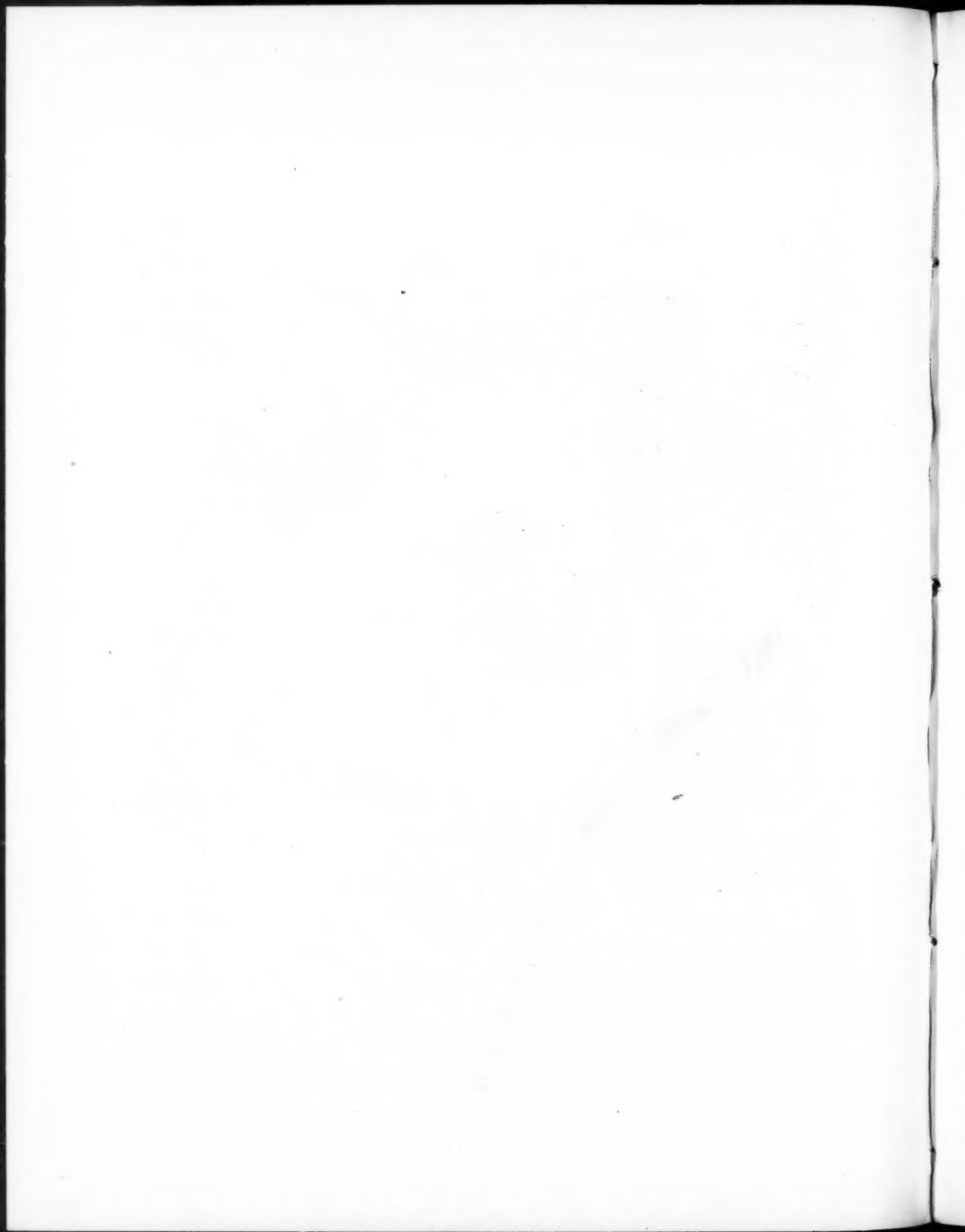


A GRACIOUS PROMISE.

MISS CONNAUGHT
MISS ULSTER
MISS LEINSTER
MISS MUNSTER

(together). "THEY'RE COMING! SURE 'TIS THE GRANDEST NEWS WE'VE HAD FOR MANNY A DAY!"

["The visit of the KING and QUEEN to Ireland is likely to be in every sense a landmark in Irish history . . . It may be hoped that they will find time to enjoy the hospitality of all the four Provinces."—*Times*, March 31, 1903.]



MR. PUNCH'S SKETCHY INTERVIEWS.

XIV.—SIGNOR MARCONI AT POLDHU.

To the question "Is the Sig. at home?" a friendly fisherman of Poldhu directed us to the battery; whither we



"He opened a bottle of wireless champagne."

proceeded and found the great inventor in the act of transmitting an ethergram message of birthday congratulations from the Editor of the *Morning Advertiser* to the Editor of the *New York Sun*.

While waiting for the reply our host invited us to a hurried lunch, consisting of Irish Stew and Polenta, washed down with a mixture invented by Mr. MARCONI, of Asti Spumante and John Jameson, known as the Pol Dew. For ourselves he opened a bottle of wireless champagne.

Mr. MARCONI, being of mixed Irish and Italian parentage, always carries a shillelagh and an accordion, invariably takes ice-cream with his potatoes, and talks in a mixture of the choicest Tuscan and Rathfarnham dialects.

Mr. MARCONI is a spare, closely-knit young man—we had almost said wiry, but he is of course anything but that.

We congratulated our host on his *rapprochement* with the Post Office.

"'Twas time for it," he replied. "If they hadn't done it, I'd have put the curse of Cornwall on them! But young CHAMBERLAIN," he added, "is the brother of a boy. Funiculi, Funiculà! Take another drop of the *creatura*."

"You must be amassing a great fortune," we murmured enviously.

"Well, I don't know about that," responded Mr. MARCONI, "but at any rate, if I am a Mullionaire I'm the only man in England who isn't a wire-puller."

Encouraged by Mr. MARCONI's affability we hazarded the question:—

"Do you know the answer to Sir WILLIAM PREECE's new riddle—'Why is MARCONI like HINDE?'"

"No, what is it?"

"'Because he produces waves in the air.' And now another question. Are you a Freemason?"

"Yes, certainly."

"May I ask what Lodge you belong to?"

"I belong to no Lodge."

"Rayleigh!"

It seemed time to change the subject.

"Do you not allow yourself any rest?" we asked.

"Corpo di Begorra!" said he. "What do I want with rest? Sure I'm inventing continually. I invent with both hands at once, begob! and my right hand has often no notion what my left has been devising. My very latest is a wireless piano to render the suburbs comfortable. It emits no sound. Then I have got a great idea—wireless netting to keep out rabbits. You see, I'm very fond of animals. I like all kinds of dogs except wire-haired terriers, and I am even now perfecting an invention to utilise the electricity in cats for domestic telegraphic purposes."

"One word more, Mr. MARCONI. Do you think that the establishment of your system is likely to promote friendlier relations between England and America?"

"Is it *think*?" responded the Signor with great warmth. "Sossaggio di Bologna! I'm convinced of it. Hasn't TEDDY ROOSEVELT given orders that Coney Island is to be rechristened Marconi Island? Oh, they're a grand people the Americans. Such beauty! such wealth! such a literature!"



"I invent with both hands at once, begob!"

"Then you do find time to read American novels?"

"Yes," replied the Wizard of Poldhu, with an expressive wink. "All of them except CABLE!"



"I am even now perfecting an invention to utilise the electricity in cats for domestic telegraphic purposes."

"CAPPING."

Mr. Punch's Sporting Correspondent sends a few suggestions for putting next season's hunting on a sound financial basis.

That every Meet should be held in a place surrounded by barbed wire, to give the Secretary a chance.

That the Secretary be provided with a special uniform, in order that visitors may not be imposed upon by unscrupulous individuals personating this official.

That "the cap" might be made to cover an accident insurance for the day of issue.

That half the money be returned on blank days.

That a graduated scale of charges might be made, according to the kind of country to be hunted, and probability of damage, the same to be advertised. For instance:—"Cheap Hunting! Great day on the Downs with the Rufford! Only £1, or £1 10s. including a brush. No jumping. All old turf, &c., &c."

That "Pilots" with a good knowledge of the country, gates, &c., be provided at a moderate charge, on application to the Secretary.

That the Secretary be provided with a sufficient force of police to secure the proceeds of "the cap."

THE NEW "WEST-ÖSTLICHE DIVAN."

[Sequent upon the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the profound sensation produced in the literary world by Mr. YONE NOUCHI's fascinating volume of verse, *From the Eastern Sea*, in which he attempts to clothe his native phantasies in a loosely-fitting English dress, has caused Mr. Punch to anticipate an immediate boom in Oriental methods. These methods being still unfamiliar, the following fragmentary essays in this kind, composed by his request, will kindly be regarded as tentative.]

I.—TO THE SLEEPING BEAUTY OF DEVONSHIRE.

By Lord R-s-b-ry.

The deafness of my Beloved is the deafness of the Sea.
Her peach-blossom lips are parted,
Her chin droops like a nocturnal petal
On the indolence of her heaving bosom.
My song is wasted on her; my
Song is no more to her than
A rivulet trickling from the unresponsive dome
Which is the back of a duck.

II.—SPRING.

By Sir H-nry C.-B.

Odorous April knocks at the door of my tabernacle.
About my boots the young birds
Hop in happy convulsions.
Rye-tooral!
But, alas! one swallow declines to make a spring to me,
One primrose turns
Her saffron cheek from me away.

III.—O YOHU.

By Mr. Arth-r B-lf-r.

My soul was a fairy-lantern with
The tallow sagging just anyhow,
Till you came back, my O Yohu,
Till you came back from the bottomless
Breezes of Ocean's commanding silence.
As a flame in the plate-glass window of a lighthouse
Looking across the tempest in a willow-pattern tea-cup, so
Was your opaline eye-flash in its crystal shrine;
As a lithe Geisha on the housetops
In a forest of chimney-stacks, so
Is your orchid to the rest
Of this balmy conservatory.

IV.—THE CAVE.

By Mr. St. J-hn Br-d-ck.

Ecstatic I scaled the heightless heights,
The breath of afternoon dandelions was in my hair.
I mocked the menace of swords;
I passed through them as through the pale shadow
Thrown by the odourless ghost of a gossamer.
Alas! there is no Eden without a worm.
I looked beneath the earth-mists
To where, in a low-down cavern,
Abutting on the roots of the Tree of Knowledge,
Sat Hu, my Comrade, making faces,
And he that was the WINSTON-pippin of my eye,
Turning sour.
O Faith! O *Esprit de corps d'armée!*

V.—THE ISLE OF GREAT CONTENT.

By Mr. G-rge W-ndh-m.

From Tarara's Halls I caught the harp that once,
For this occasion only, no more.
I smote on it *Boom-de-ai*; I
Invited alien jigs on the green.
Out of the verdant-isled lakes that are her eyes, she
(O the wearing of the orange-blossom in my heart!)

Glanced a side-long fragrance on me and said,
"Thou art my WYNDHAM in the reeds!"

VI.—THE UNRENEWED LICENCE.

By a Tory Publican.

Lazily dreamed my boat on a tide full of poem;
Jauntily it slid like a sloe-jinricksha
Over a carpet of daffodils,
Or else cherry-blossoms.
The peace of perfect rotundity was my peace.
Could it have been an octopus?
Something, I know not why or how,
Removed the bung of my boat; I
Heavily downward disappeared
Into the infernal moist.
As I descended I heard in my ear,
Like the voiceless murmur of a shell picked
Up on the beach of Solitude,
Over my melancholic head the back-ebb of the tide.

VII.—MOTES AND SUNBEAMS.

By a Competitor for the Gordon-Bennett Cup.

What the dancing mote
Says as he kicks the beam, I say;
What the four-wheeled shamrock hums,
I hum.

O. S.

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE IN U.S.A

[“The following Resolution has been passed by the Senate of the State of Missouri. Resolved—That the Committee of Criminal Jurisprudence be instructed to take into consideration the necessity and importance of the passage of a law providing for the taxation, branding, and licensing of foreign lords and noblemen, both real and genuine, bogus and fraudulent, found running at large in the State of Missouri, and providing severe penalties for the violation of the said law, to the end that the young women of Missouri may be protected and fully warned against engaging in speculation of so risky and dangerous a character.”—*New York World*.]

In the following handbill, left at the doors of a fair correspondent in Missouri, we seem to trace the culminating cause of the above scare:—

THE MISSOURI PEER-IMPORTING COMPANY.—This Company was formed to meet the ever-increasing demand for lords and noblemen in the State of Missouri and U.S.A. generally.

Absolutely no risk run by our customers!

Ladies dealing with us are assured of fair treatment and prompt delivery.

Without fear of contradiction we affirm that our Peers are superior in rank and pedigree *and in position in their own countries*, to any noblemen now on the market.

Every lord supplied to our customers is branded with the State Stamp, and no goods that are not up to the Government standard are retailed at our stores.

Our stock of British Dukes is the finest in the world, and at the Missouri Exhibition we were awarded the Gold Medal for this rare and beautiful type of goods.

A choice selection of belted Earls is always on view in our showrooms.

We highly recommend our “B.B.B.” or British Baron Brand. These may be had in three styles—English, Irish, or Scotch. We do a large business in these goods with people who like a good article but cannot afford the more costly brands. As, however, the supply is limited, customers are advised to purchase early.

We have a very cheap line in French Counts, which we are offering at prices to suit the smallest purse. Such of these goods as we sell bear the Government imprint, though personally we do not care to recommend them, having had frequent complaint regarding their quality.

We beg leave to observe that the lowest-priced Peers—such for instance as Polish Counts—we do not stock, as in very few cases have they been found satisfactory. We venture to urge upon our clients the advisability of paying a somewhat higher price and ensuring quality. *Peers delivered to any address in U.S.A. free of duty and carriage paid.*

The following are samples of the testimonials which we are receiving daily:—

The Marchioness of FITZ-PORTCULLIS (*née* Miss POLLY PORKER) writes:—"Your Marquis is simply lovely—and so intelligent. Please send two more, as I want them for birthday presents for my sisters. Am going to England shortly. Yours sincerely,
"POLLY FITZ-PORTCULLIS."

A Countess (who desires to be anonymous) writes:—"Earl recently received and gives every satisfaction. Have shown him to friend who bought Russian Prince last year, and she says she wished she had heard of your Firm then, for she certainly would have tried one of your Earls."

"P.S.—Please send me French Count suitable for presentation to elderly maiden aunt. Was delighted with Irish Baron."

QUEER CALLINGS.

V.—THE CAT'S COLOURMAN.

"WELL, to put it briefly, I am a specialist in chromatic kittens."

"Chromatic kittens?"

"Yes. It was at the time of the Green Carnation that I just began to study the question. If flowers could be changed in hue, I thought, why not creatures? The ordinary cat spends most of its time on the hearth-rug—a sufficiently conspicuous position—but how few cats really harmonise with that or any other article of furniture? Being myself intensely sensitive to discords of colours, I decided to invent the decorative cat. I soon started the scheme on a business-like basis, and now I can assure you that hardly a day passes without my receiving fifty white kittens by rail from all parts of the kingdom. These are dyed as required, instructions being supplied with each. It would never do, of course, to place a scarlet cat in a pink drawing-room, or to give a crushed strawberry cat the *entrée* of a dining-room decorated in Pompeian red."

"Of course not."

"Still, I get curious requests occasionally. As, for example, here is one from a disconsolate widow asking for a heliotrope cat, as it was her favourite colour."

"But, Mr. Pash," we interjected,



AN OMISSION BEST OMITTED.

Brown (on foot). "DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE TOTAL IS FOR THE SEASON?"

Simkins (somewhat new to country life). "FIFTEEN PAIRS OF FOXES, THE HUNTSMAN SAYS. BUT HE SEEMS TO HAVE KEPT NO COUNT OF RABBITS OR 'ARES, AND I KNOW THEY'VE KILLED AND EATEN A LOT OF THOSE!"

"doesn't it interfere with the health of the animal?"

"Not a bit," was the prompt answer.

"One of my first experiments was on a rather dilapidated tabby, and a coat of Eau de Nil gave it a new lease of life."

"Do you think of applying your method to dogs and horses?"

"In time, perhaps, when the horse ceases to be a beast of burden, and is permitted to lead a purely decorative existence. As for dogs, I am inclined to think that the employment of green foxhounds, for example, might sensibly add to the exhilaration of the chase."

We hinted our assent.

"But to return to our kittens. I am far from having exhausted the possibilities of the invention. For example, I am experimenting at present with a view to producing a kitten with an iridescent coat. If rainbow trout, why not rainbow cats?"

"Of course. And who are your principal customers?"

"They are drawn from all strata of the social system. Only yesterday Mr. HALL CAINE sent me a beautiful Manx cat to be upholstered in Cardinal red, and this morning a basket containing a Kilkenny kitten has reached me from Lord DUNRAVEN, to be embroidered with shamrocks, and despatched as a *pignus amoris* to Mr. JOHN REDMOND. And now I fear I must ask you to excuse me, as these commissions must be executed without delay."

CHANGE OF NAME.—The practice of taking a new name on coming into property is common. It is more rare to do so on the strength of being "cut off." This, however, is the case with Fleetwood-on-Wyre, which, not by arrangement with the Postmaster-General, will adopt the style of Fleetwood-off-Wire.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.

["GOVERNESS WANTED, who will be able and willing to inflict sound corporal punishment on two unruly children, aged 11 and 13. State experience and salary required to Mrs. ———, Christian World.]

Ye vinegar virgins, come hither,
Whose temper has always been such
That woovers have left you to wither,
Nor ever felt tempted to touch;
Forbidding, bespectacled, bony,
The nightmares that nurseries dread,
With hearts that are cruel and stony,
And hands that are heavy as lead;

Ye spinsters of mustard and pepper,
Whose services no one will need,
Who live the lone life of the leper,
Come hither, come hither and read;
For though you be grim as the Gorgon,
And equally fatal to view,
You may find in this excellent organ
That someone is looking for you.

Come hither, ye feminine *Squerees*,
And all ye *Miss Murdstones*, and ye
Whose passion for juvenile tears is
As deep as the bottomless sea;
Two small desperadoes, unruly
And simply inviting the cane,
Await your attentions—it's truly
A chance you may not get again.

And as for the laws that are written
You never need care what they be,
Because there are judges in Britain
Who laugh at the S. P. C. C.
So wallop your victims, endeavour
To urge them along in the search
For wisdom, remembering ever
That knowledge's tree is the birch.

OUR POINT TO POINT
LUNCHEON.

To finish the hunting season, a dozen
of us who were to ride in the Point to
Point steeplechase agreed to lunch
together in a tent beforehand. We
thought it would be such a pleasant
function.

It began to rain just before twelve,
and the wet was dripping steadily
through our canvas roof into the salad
bowls and on to the beef, as we, with
mutual greetings—loud, but lacking
somewhat in joviality—took our places
at the trestle table.

"Looks like a thing to support a
coffin on!" cried young BULKINS.

It was a cheerful remark to make
under the circumstances, and it struck
me that three or four men immediately
became gloomy.

THRUSTERFORD JONES was voted to the
chair, and his first remark was:—

"I say, you chaps, it's a ripping
course for to-day: regular cut-throat
line, eh? I like these thumping big
courses myself."

Nota Bene.—T. J. was not riding in
the race.

I replied:—"Ye-s—oh, yes—so do
I." But somehow my own tones lacked
conviction.

T. J. (*cheerily*). It's far best to make
up the fences really big: horses rise at
them better—until they tire, of course,
then you get a crumpler!

I repeated rather absently:—"Yes,
then you get a crumpler."

T. J. I mean to go down to that
beastly-looking place—the drop into
the lane, over some high new timber.
That's the spot where the "grief" will
come in!

I said mechanically:—"Yes, that's
the spot where the grief will come in,"
and pushed my plate away from me.
Never could stand the smell of cooking
when not feeling very well.

T. J. (*laughing boisterously*). By
Jove, I wouldn't have that timber and
the drop beyond if you were to offer
me fifty pounds!

ARCHIE SMITHSON here struck in:—
"Oh, rot, THRUSTERFORD! I saw
DARLINGTON get safely over it last
season."

T. J. Yes, on a horse he paid a
monkey for! But wait till you chaps
get down there to-day! By gad, I
wouldn't miss the fun for any money!

Always was a breezy creature, THRUS-
TERFORD. Did not feel particularly breezy
myself at the moment.

T. J. (*to me*). You're eating no lunch,
FUNKFORT. Feel a bit off colour?

Everybody turns to look at me, whilst
conversation is momentarily suspended.
Could have cheerfully attended THRUS-
TERFORD's obsequies at that embarrassing
moment. So exhilarating for those
about to engage in hazardous emprise
to listen to his agreeable prattle.

I say, "Ha, ha! deuced funny fellow
you are. Pass the *Moet*, will you, old
chap?"

That "Ha, ha!" did not ring quite
as true as I could have wished, but to
bridge over the dreadful moment of
silence it served.

I was to ride THRUSTERFORD JONES's
Sudden End in the race, and now his
owner told me all about him.

"He's a splendid jumper, and
although he pulls very hard and rushes
all his fences, he gets over them—
somehow. And he'll jump this course
to-day—all but that place into the lane,
and there you'd better have it some-
where out of the crowd; he's pretty
sure to 'come it' over the rails, and
then you can take your toss without the
rest jumping on you. Well, ta, ta. I'm
just going to see that the surgeon is
here, and the ambulance men not too
drunk to work when they're wanted."

Wish I had THRUSTERFORD JONES's
bright, hopeful disposition. Swallowed

lump in my throat and went out to my
mount *Sudden End*—encouraging name
for a steeplechaser. Told groom I
thought horse not fit—groom said he was
—groom a fool. Said I hadn't weights
enough to make up the thirteen stone
—groom said he had plenty—man's a
drivelling idiot. Told him at last I
was sure the horse was lame in the
stifle—groom about to deny it when I
dropped a sovereign into his hand—
groom closed one eye and immediately
saw the lameness—groom very smart
fellow, and led horse away directly. I
promptly walked over to far side of
course to see race—always see race
best from far side of course: less
crowd; besides, I did not exactly
wish to meet THRUSTERFORD JONES: he—
he—he might be feeling disappointed,
and I had a sort of impression that he
would not see that stifle lameness, and
might insist upon starting the horse.
Some men are very cruel that way, and
have no consideration for their frien-
—horses'—feelings.

A PASTORAL.

The weather (in the past
Emphatically bitter),
Seems to have changed at last.
The birds begin to twitter.

The rivers, decked with sedge,
In lavish streams are flowing.
On every side the veg-
-Etables, too, are growing.

The young man's fancy turns
In almost all directions;
Promiscuously burns
The lamp of his affections.

Approaches now the close
Of Rugby and of "Socker;"
The football jersey goes
Back to its native locker.

To make rough meadows flat
The cricketer is toiling;
He scans his favourite bat,
In case the thing wants oiling.

The bard begins to tear
His hyacinthine tresses,
Or polishes with care
Last year's returned M.S.S.

The farmer once again—
I learn from one who knows it—
Takes quantities of grain,
And walks about and sows it.

Dear friends, who hear my song,
Of brain decay acquit me.
That explanation's wrong—
I'll make it clear. Permit me.

The reason why I sing,
The point at which I'm driving,
Is simply this: that Spring
Is rapidly arriving.

THE GREAT MISUNDERSTOOD.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—In view of the fact that representatives of the British Parliament have been invited to visit Canada during the Easter Recess, I beg to make a few suggestions and offer some hints that will be found of the highest value.

When the august company arrives at Halifax it will be met by Mr. PARKIN and others, who will attempt to present an address expressing their satisfaction "at this further evidence of the spread of Imperial ideas"; but the committee should begin right by firmly refusing to accept addresses between meals. This will not only insure them a sufficiency of banquets, but save them from water-brash on the brain, due to an over-indulgence in illuminated rhetoric.

When passing through Montreal and Quebec the visitors must step lightly so as to "let sleeping dogs lie." While in Montreal they should not fail to visit the ruins of the Ice Palace, which is still freezing the reputation of the country, though a dozen years have passed since it was built.

When visiting Toronto in order to receive the homage of the Orange Lodges they will probably be waited on by a deputation from the Canadian Club, whose members will sing the new Imperial song, "*The Red Tape of Old England*." As this song promises to become a favourite in all the Colonies, the visitors should listen to it attentively.

It will not be necessary to visit Ottawa, as most of the Knights who make up its population have already been on exhibition in England.

After banqueting at Winnipeg the explorers should leave the railway line and cross the plains on prairie schooners. These interesting conveyances are very comfortable, as they are so arranged that the traveller gets the whole spring of the axle.

They must not expect, however, to get any jerked buffalo meat or pemmican at wayside inns, for the buffalo has really disappeared. In the words of the poet:

"No more in herds the bison sweeps
Across the trackless plains;
The Eastern pie-belt wider creeps,
And holds its sodden gains.

"Where once the Indian to the death
Chased pioneer and scout,
The Swede, with alcoholic breath,
Sets rows of cabbage out."

On reaching the Rocky Mountains they will be given a chance to select peaks and bluffs for which they will be asked to stand as godfathers. They should accept the kindness, as it is one of the pretty customs of the country to name mountains after important visitors, and there is still enough rock and ice to go round.

In British Columbia they will begin to see signs bearing the legend, "Keep



!!!!

Estate Agent (to Labourer's Son). "HERE, MY BOY, WHERE CAN I FIND YOUR FATHER?"
Boy. "IN THE PIG-STYE, SIR. YOU'LL KNOW HIM BY 'IS BROWN 'AT!'"

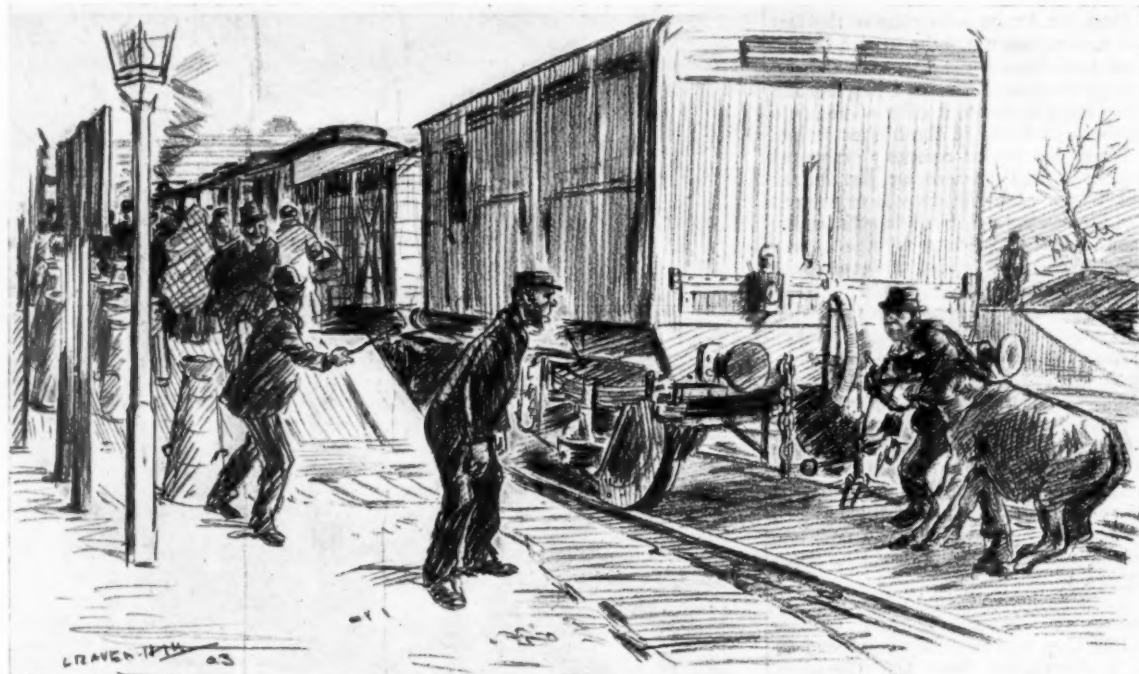
off the Disputed Territory." They will be wise to take the hint. While in this district they will probably see hordes of hungry promoters hovering on their flanks. As it is really worth while to see these fierce creatures in action, they should devote some time to a study of their habits. All that is necessary is to show them a roll of notes, and they will do the rest. To see them pry apart a capitalist and his cash is a sight never to be forgotten—by the capitalist. In case, however, any visitor should wish to render himself immune from the mining fever—to be vaccinated, as it were—the writer begs to say that he has some mining stock which he bought long since, and is still hunting for another sucker to sell to.

By following these hints and avoiding the usual practice of distinguished visitors who travel with their mouths open and eyes shut, they will probably learn something that none of their home-keeping colleagues will believe after their return. Yours faithfully,

C. A. NUCK.

MESSAGE FROM MARS. A LIBEL ACTION.

—If these phrases, culled from a poster of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, are to be interpreted on the principle of *post hoc, propter hoc*, it certainly seems a pity that thus early in the career of the Marconigram there should occur a regrettable incident likely to affect the tacit *entente cordiale* between two friendly planets.



SCENE—An Irish Station. Fair Day.

Porter. "AN' WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YE DOIN', TYING THAT DONKEY UP THERE?"

Pat (slightly under the influence, taking his new purchase home). "SHURE AN' I'VE A PERFECT LIGHT TO! HAVEN'T I TAKEN A TICKET FOR THE BASTE!"

CHARIVARIA.

THE Liberals in the House continue to be polite to Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, and the Adulterated Butter Bill has passed through the Committee stage.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN has expressed himself as in favour of the payment of Members of Parliament. The Right Honourable Gentleman does not seem to realise that, if Members were to be paid, the Public might insist on getting value for their money.

A question has been asked in the House about the abolition of the lance in the Army. It may not be generally known that the abolition is due to the influence of Lord KITCHENER, who had such trouble with the State Lancers at the Durbar Ball.

Some disappointment has been caused because the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal has issued its report without touching the question of Alien Criminals.

The War Office is about to embark on an expenditure of at least £160,000. Woolwich Arsenal is to be enlarged,

and the cost has been estimated at £80,000.

Orders have been given for experiments to be made with a new Rangefinder. Later on, attention will be given to the claims of a Patent Army-Corps finder.

The Presidents of Salvador and Guatemala have had an interview on board a vessel at sea, as a result of which the differences between the two Republics have been arranged. The Presidents were palpably sick of the previous state of affairs.

It is rumoured that there was no Revolution in Argentina last week.

At Moscow a judge has been found guilty of burglary, and has been condemned to serve for three years as a common soldier. The other men serving in the Regiment are asking what they are there for.

To judge by what one saw on Show Sunday, pictures on gloomy subjects will be a principal feature of the forthcoming Academy. Suggested name for this particular school:—The Depressionists.

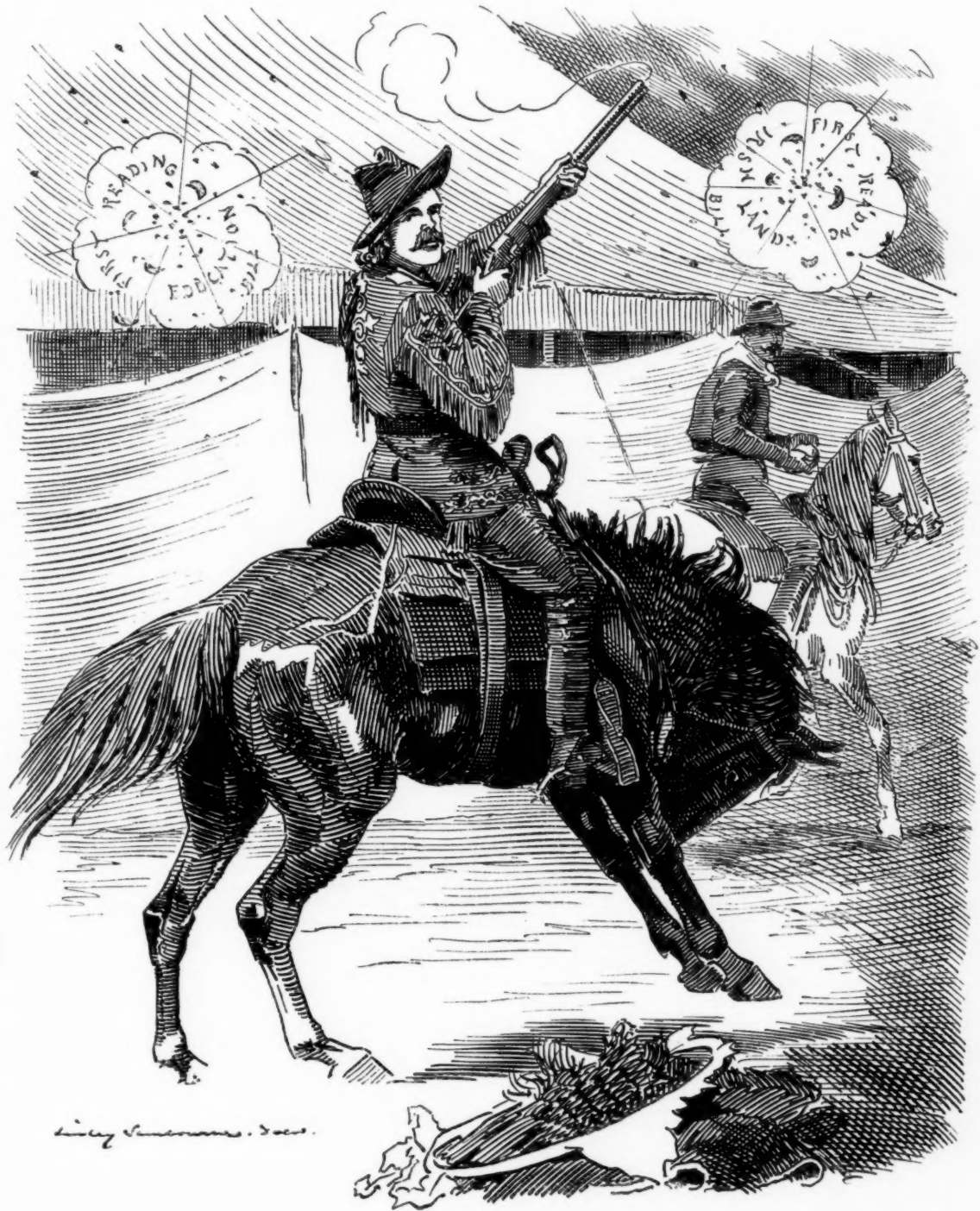
It is reported that Mr. W. E. HENLEY has been served with a summons. It has been held that his poem on "Speed," in the *World's Work*, is so realistic that he must have exceeded the pace allowed by law.

With reference to the report that King EDWARD and President LOUBET will shortly meet, an Irish newspaper declares that it may be true about King EDWARD, but it certainly is not true about President LOUBET.

SOME "learned experts," observed Signor MARCONI in his clever speech last week at the Company's meeting, had declared that in order to converse with friends across the Atlantic by means of the Marconi system, "it would be necessary to erect towers at each end several miles high." Signor MARCONI had no difficulty in dealing with the absurdity of this "tall talk," and reducing it to the level of common-sense understandings.

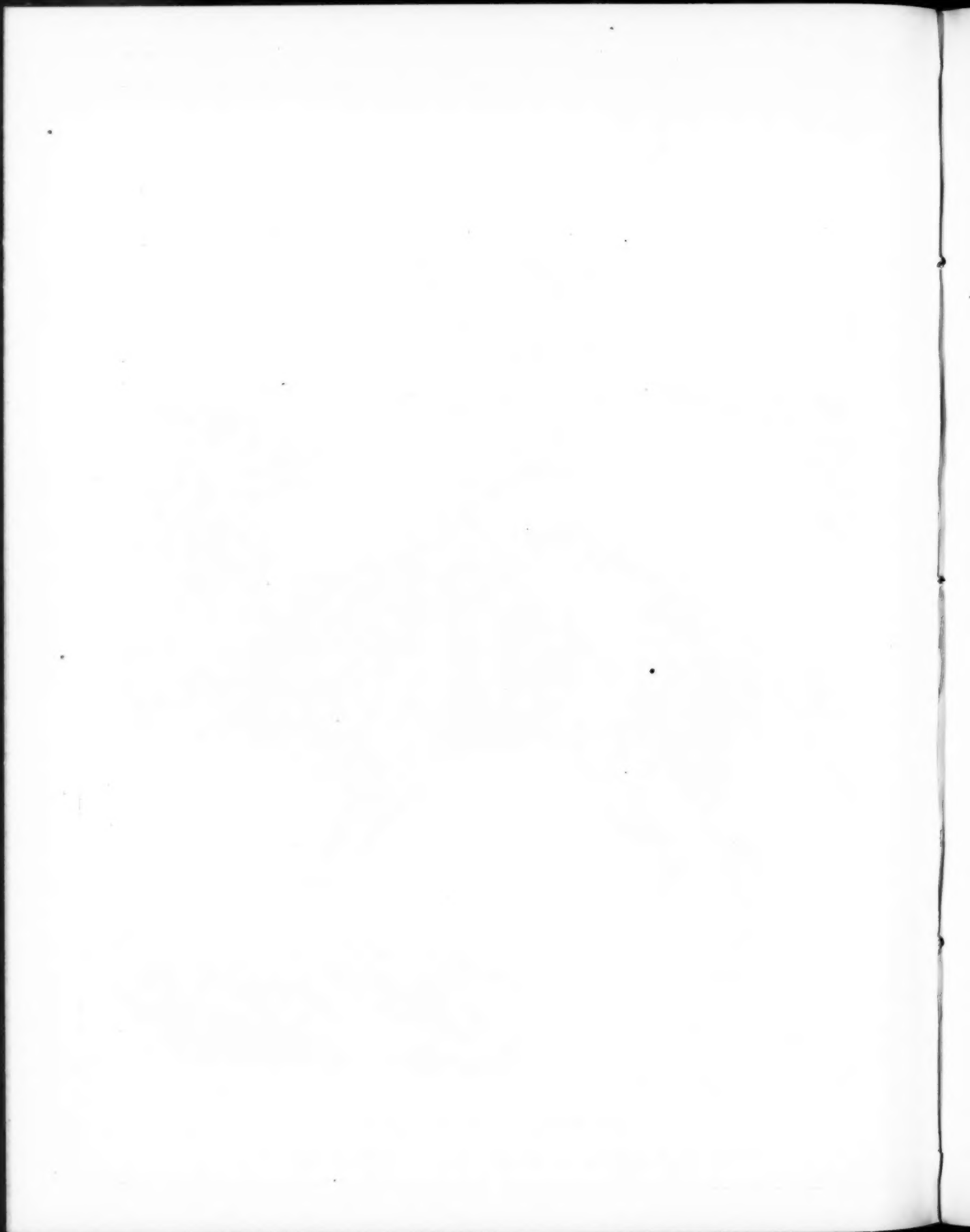
VIRGIL ON GOLF. — "Miscueruntque herbas et non innoxia verba."

Georgics, 3, 283.



BUFFALO BALFOUR.

(End of first part of the entertainment. Two weeks allowed for refreshment.)



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, March 30.—Army and Navy both understood to be fighting forces. Happened to be to the front to-day in Committee of Supply. The difference striking. Morning sitting devoted to Navy, a sleepy stretch of hours through which the Admirals, the Captains, and the OVERFLOWING LOUGH cooed to ARNOLD-FORSTER as gently as sucking doves.

But Linden saw another sight when the drums beat at dead of night. To be precise, it was about eleven o'clock. Army Estimates on since nine, with prevalent dullness almost rivalling the siesta hour of the Navy. Young Generals below Gangway on Ministerial side,



"WHERE'S BECKETT?"

The Prehistoric R-sch spoiling for a brush with the Cave-dwellers.

coming back after dinner—mess they now call it—and seeing CARNOT BROADRICK on the Treasury Bench, things began to bubble. It was Cousin HUGH who flung the fat in the fire. To his inflamed, distorted imagination, there is about the Warrior at the head of the office in Pall Mall something suggestive of a Nonconformist Minister who insists on being addressed as Reverend. A man of few prejudices, that happens to ruffle a temper constitutionally angelic. The fact that the fancy is absolutely baseless has nothing to do with its force. Wringing hopeless hands over CARNOT, he insisted upon knowing, "Where are the guns for which the right hon. gentleman is waiting? Are they in the clouds, and is he waiting for them to materialise?"

This way of putting it (subtly, if not designedly, reminiscent of the case of Frau ROTHE, of Berlin, whose gift in

the direction of materialising spiritual flowers and heavenly oranges has just landed her in prison) plunged a loyal Ministerialist into condition of anguished remonstrance.

"Withdraw! Withdraw!" he moaned.

"This is not factious Opposition," Cousin HUGH meekly said, "as some people of less intelligence than my hon. friend behind seem to think."

Here other loyal Ministerialists—whom later EDMUND BECKETT described as "having their intellect atrophied from the effect of overdieting on the crumbs which fall from Ministerial plates"—cut themselves with knives (of course in a Parliamentary sense) and howled.

"Order! Order!" "Withdraw!" they shouted.

"What!" cried Cousin HUGH, regarding them compassionately. "Is it insulting to say that there are some people less intelligent than my hon. friend behind?"

This painfully ambiguous. The sting of it lay in the inflection of voice which revealed conviction that in the matter of intelligence zero had been reached in the case of his honourable but hapless friend. Anyhow the phrase was unassailable on the point of order, and Cousin HUGH, having sprinkled vitriol round a wide circle of honourable friends and esteemed leaders, resumed his seat with that attitude and expression that ever recalls the ascetic saint who has temporarily stepped from a stained glass window to mingle for a while with mundane affairs.

Business done.—In Committee of Supply on Army and Navy Estimates.

Tuesday night.—All afternoon debating Hanbury's Butter Bill. Next to Land Purchase most deeply interests Irish Members. Reveals fresh faction in their union of hearts. It appears that whilst certain provisions in Bill carry comfort to the Cork buttermaker, they are loathed by his colleague in Limerick. Hour after hour Irish Members rise in succession and go for each other with rival battle cries—"Limerick!" "Cork!"

Out of the *mêlée* looms large a personality that only Ireland could produce. It is Mr. LUNDON, Member for East Limerick, by business a farmer, by aptitude and study a classical scholar of high degree. In Limerick County he is known as a "Professor of Languages." Unfortunately for us the one tongue he has not mastered is the English. For full half an hour he spoke in voice and accent the like of which was never heard on land or sea. Only here and there was drift of a phrase fully mastered. Mr. JEFFREYS in the Chair, in absence of SPEAKER and Chairman of Ways and Means concurrently on sick list,

anxiously strained attention to follow the oration. For all he knew, the quaint-looking figure below the Gangway, with the strongly marked countenance, the pragmatistical grey beard trimmed goatee fashion, waving its arms aloft as if hymning incantation, might be blaspheming or uttering sedition.

Quite gratefully the Deputy Speaker caught a reference to Scylla and Charybdis, the one represented by the landlord, the other by Gombeen man. (You should have heard the terrific hatred and scorn Mr. LUNDON's inflection of voice managed to flash around the head of the Gombeen man.) Deputy Speaker pointed out that Scylla and Charybdis



A PERORATION FROM LIMERICK.

Mr. L-and-n beseeches the Committee not to put Irish Adulterated Butter between the Scylla of Landlordism and the Charybdis of the Gombeen man; nor to stretch it on the Procrustean bed where the legs of captives laid on it were cut off by tyrants who put them there if they were too long (or words to that effect).

had nothing to do with the manufacture of Irish butter.

Oh, yes, Mr. LUNDON was coming to that; the Limerick butter-maker on his way to market had to steer his perilous way between the two.

Next he began a story about a pirate who boarded a ship and made the captain walk the plank. This was understood to have some personal reference to President of Board of Agriculture. But whether HANBURY was the pirate, or the doomed captain, not clear. Deputy Speaker dashed hope of elucidating matter by ruling both out of order in connection with the adulteration of butter.



"THE SOWER."

What will he reap?

(With apologies to J-n Fr-nc-s M-l-l.)

Then Mr. LUXON dropped into foreign tongue. REDMOND cadet, sitting behind him, believing it was ancient Erse, sagely wagged his head and truculently cried, "Hear! hear!" The keener ear of the MEMBER FOR SARK recognised the musical verse of VIRGIL babbling o' cool valleys, and the lowing kine and soft slumbers beneath the spreading tree:—

*Hic secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum; hic latis otia fundis,
Speluncæ, vivi que lacus; hic frigida Tempe,
Mugitusque bovm, mollesque sub arbore sonni.*

It was magnificent; but it wasn't butter, even with the lowing kine suggestive of milking time thrown in.

Business done.—Adulteration of Butter Bill read a second time.

Friday night.—House of Lords empty to-night. The statesmen who lend dignity and colour to stately Chamber are making holiday. To distinguish themselves from the com-

monality they began their Easter holidays last Monday, and will not conclude them till the last two days of April. In this leisurely recess perhaps they will turn their attention to a small matter which happens to loom large in the convenience and comfort of some obscure fellow mortals. As everyone knows, the House of Commons, amending its ways, transposed the arrangements for its sittings on Wednesdays and Fridays. Formerly the SPEAKER took the Chair at noon on Wednesday, the sitting being adjourned at six o'clock, whereas Friday was an ordinary sitting, commencing under the old rules at three o'clock, terminating at midnight. Now Wednesday is in this respect as Friday, Friday as Wednesday. The avowed intention of the alteration was that Ministers, Members and others in close attendance through the week, might, if they pleased, start their week-ending on Friday afternoon.

This was a crumb of comfort bestowed in consideration of the longer hours of labour toiled through during the week under the New Rules. The House now meeting on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at two o'clock, with an interval for dinner, sits at the minimum till midnight, sometimes later. The British workman who draws the line at eight hours a day will understand that when on Friday evening six o'clock chimes from Big Ben, his fellow labourer at Westminster is disposed to profit by his share of the bargain that took away from him Wednesday evening.

In establishing new Rules the Commons answered only for themselves. Four sittings a week, running on the average a duration of from five minutes to twenty-five minutes, suffice for noble Lords. They do not sit on Wednesdays, but go their even way on Fridays as if nothing had happened in the other House. Last Friday was selected for resumption of debate on Lord ROSEBURY's motion on subject of Council of Defence. Commons up at half-past five, went off home assuming that, as usual, everyone else would be free and the place locked up. But Members of the Press Gallery, the little army of attendants at Westminster, and the police on duty outside, were compelled to linger on till, at half-past eight, debate in the Lords literally yawned itself out.

A small matter, as I have said; nothing at all to Peers, or even to Commons. As avoidance is, however, easy and obvious, it may be worth thinking about. There is no reason in the world why the sittings of the Lords and Commons should not synchronise, their Lordships transposing Wednesday's and Friday's arrangements, as the Commons did. Or, if that revolution would have a tendency to undermine the Constitution, at least care should be taken not to put down for Friday night subjects for debate calculated exceptionally to exceed the average sittings of the House. Twice in the brief section of the Session already sped this consideration has been overlooked. The adjourned debate of last week might just as conveniently have been put down for Thursday as for Friday.

Business done.—Private Members'.

Wednesday, 8th April.—Adjourned for Easter Holidays. School reopens Tuesday week.

HUMOUR AS AN EXTINGUISHER.—The *Sheffield Daily Independent*, in giving an account of a local fire, states that Superintendent FROST (a good name for a humourist) "soon had three powerful jests directed into the heart of the flames."



Mother (to Son, who has been growing rather free of speech). "TOMMY, IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO SAY 'HANG IT!' AGAIN, I'LL GIVE YOU SIXPENCE."

Tommy. "ALL RIGHT, MA. BUT I KNOW ANOTHER WORD THAT'S WORTH HALF-A-CROWN!"

HINTS FOR AMATEUR NOVELISTS.

Of the Storyteller's Aim.—The art of the novelist is at present apparently complicated by the necessity of writing with one eye upon the theatres of the West End. It is not enough to conquer one world; having achieved publication, you will (to be in the fashion) naturally sigh for production in dramatic form. In reality this simplifies your task. It is no longer worth while penning long-drawn word-paintings of after-glows, or moonlit landscapes—thrilling though you would doubtless make them—since they would of course have to be cut out when your work bursts its Mudie chrysalis to blossom into the many-hued butterfly of (say) His Majesty's. A few brief words at the head of each chapter ought to be now all that is necessary. For instance:—"Chapter X. Same as Chapter IX. Lights down. Red lime. The reader will kindly hum three bars of 'The Honeyuckle, &c.' to take curtain up. Dulcinea discovered."—and then get on with your dialogue as soon as you can get anybody there

for her to talk to. *Mutatis mutandis*, the moonlit landscape may be similarly described.

Of Subjects to be avoided.—There are hardly any left, except, perhaps, the weather, which is usually considered in this country a subject sacred to *viva voce* discussion. At any rate, on occasions the date of which is fixed either by yourself or by history, the weather should not be more particularly described than you can help. Unless you are careful, some unpleasantly laborious person will be sure to write to the papers to say that he has looked it up, and that it was astronomically impossible that the moon could have been shining when you made her do it.

Of Local Colour.—Forget, every now and then, to translate out of their original tongue the remarks of your historical, provincial, or foreign characters. At least, give them an occasional swear in their native language. There are swear-words in Malay, for instance, that are worth six full-page illustrations.

Of Historical Costume.—The neigh-

bourhood of Covent Garden is the place to study this, and, having regard to the subsequent destination of your novel, already foreshadowed, you might, whilst there, settle the colour of your heroine's wig. But modern dress is much more economical for touring purposes.

Of Portraits.—As of course you cannot foresee what the ladies and gentlemen who will ultimately embody your puppets will be like, it is best to leave their personal appearance somewhat vague. Sketch your heroine in a few bold strokes—"the face of a GIBSON girl, with the expression of a BURNE JONES angel," for instance. This makes things clear enough, and leaves your leading lady a free hand. But her laughter must "ripple" in the book, whatever it does on the stage.

Of Style.—The style is the man. What it is when—as by chance might be the case—you are a lady, there is no familiar quotation to declare.

SOMETHING BY "TURNS" AND NOTHING LONG.—DAN LENO.

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS.

XX.—THE DARE-DEVILS.

THE train, I am told, will be ready to start in ten minutes. Meanwhile the lights in the carriages have been turned off, and it stands by the platform a dark and inert mass, while its engine, enjoying a brief freedom, potters about short-windedly some little distance up the line. I grope my way into a compartment, and taking the seat near the window, gaze out on to the platform, occupied only by a meditative porter and a few sleepy passengers on seats.

After a time I hear several footsteps descending the stairs, and the sound of voices and shrill giggles. In a few moments the party comes into sight on the platform; two young women in semi-evening dress and cloaks, and two young men in silk hats, one of them carrying a net-bag with shoes in it. They are disposed to be somewhat rowdy in a subdued kind of way. As they advance up the platform, the weak-kneed young man in pince-nez, whom I immediately detect as the chief dare-devil of the party, begins to sing in a fairly audible voice a mild comic song of the parochial bazaar type. At this the ladies are very fluttered and shocked, and on the whole a little pleased with the conviction that he is a terribly rowdy fellow, and that they are rather a gay party altogether.

After questioning a porter, the quartet continue their march up to the extreme end of the platform. I have risen and am looking out of the window. As they turn, Pince-Nez pretends to knock off the hat of his companion, a fat young man, in face rather like a dazed sheep, and the pair fall to fencing with their umbrellas amidst cries of consternation from the ladies. This ends in one young man dropping his umbrella on to the line and jumping down for it, which shows courage; and the other young man lifting him bodily up, which shows strength; and the first young man pretending to fall down again, which shows wit. At all of which the young ladies are shocked and pleased, and plainly conscious that they never did have such a time in all their lives.

Soon the party approaches the train, which is still in darkness, and, as it chances, selects the compartment where I am seated once more in the corner. They enter, Pince-Nez displaying humorous terror at the darkness—a terror which suddenly assumes a distinctly genuine note when he sits down unexpectedly on top of me. However, he retrieves his character by putting his head out of window, and addressing the meditative porter in a voice which

seems to me badly pitched if it is intended to reach him.

"Porter, old chap, why don't you turn the lights on? I can't see to hear myself speak."

The ladies are quite overwhelmed by the reckless devilry of this last effort. Whereupon the Dazed Sheep is moved by a spirit of emulation to imitate a fog-horn, which gains a certain amount of admiration, though totally eclipsed immediately after by Pince-Nez—on the lamps being suddenly turned on—pretending to be struck by lightning.

At last the train moves on. As we get clear of the station Pince-Nez boldly strikes up the "*Swanee River*"; the Dazed Sheep joins him, and the ladies opposite, with a nervous glance in my direction, chime in in still small voices with a visible consciousness of the audacity of the whole proceeding. The chorus finished, Pince-Nez, elated by his success, proceeds to the second verse:—

"When I was playing with my brother,
Ha-ap-py was I—"

Suddenly Pince-Nez's top hat is whipped off his head from behind, and waved wildly in the air by a mysterious black hand. The ladies gasp, then almost shriek with terror at the apparition which has appeared above the partition, the apparition of a filthy face surmounted by a dented bowler hat.

"Tee tum tee tum tee tumty!" sings the apparition, beating time with the captured silk hat, "that's the style, boys an' gals—*orl* together:—"

"Woh tike me to my dear ole mother,
Theer let me live han die."

The apparition pauses, and contemplates the scared group.

"Come on, some of yer," he urges; "that ain't 'arf singin'." Show 'em the wye, BERTIE,"—addressing the Dazed Sheep, who has fallen into a kind of terrified trance—"any song yer like. There ain't many as I cawn't sing, I give yer my word."

The quartet are silent.

"Tell yer wot I *will* do," remarks the apparition, replacing the hat boisterously over Pince-Nez's left eyebrow, "I'll give y' a chune myself."

He disappears for a moment behind the partition, then, reappearing again, lowers a greasy bundle on to Pince-Nez's lap.

"'Old my pawcel a minute, mate," he says, "while I git over." Then, to the consternation of everybody, proceeds to clamber over the partition into our compartment.

"That's the wye ter do it," he observes, scraping a pair of muddy hobnailed boots down Pince-Nez's arm as he slides heavily on to the seat beside him. "'Ere we are *orl* together, snug an' comferble. I'll tike the pawcel, mate."

He is a huge burly man, connected, I should say, to judge from his hands and face, with some industry with a good deal of black oil in it. The train has just stopped at a station; I notice the quartet glance towards the window in a hunted way, but the platform is deserted. The train moves on again, and they regard their companion apprehensively.

"If it's a song yer want," he observes with enthusiasm, "I'm the bloke for yer. Tell yer wot I *will* do. I'll give yer a chorus, then yer can *orl* join in. More soshorable. Narthen, boys an' gals, *orl* together!"

Amidst a general silence he proceeds to sing with energy:—

"We're *orl* on the booze on the tiddley hi till
Monday,

We won't be at 'ome with the missis an' the
kids on Sunday.

If we get pinched we'll kick the copper in
the eye.

We put away the lotion as if it was the ocean
when we're on the tiddley hi."

He desists, and mops his face with the loose end of Pince-Nez's muffler.

"Yer didn't 'arf sing up, any of yer," he observes cheerily. "Give us a recitashun, CHAWLEY. You've got a comic face."

Pince-Nez, very flushed, affects to be interested in an advertisement. The oily man, in the best of spirits, turns to the lady opposite him.

"Woddyer think o' the Licensin' Act?" he inquires chattily. "*Orl* right, ain't it? Corl this a free country! Yer cawn't corl yerself free when y' aren't allahd 't'ave a pint o' beer, can yer nar? I ask yer."

The lady makes no reply.

"Wot's more," he continues emphatically, "not only yer mayn't get boozed *yerself*, but y' ain't even allahd to 'elp a pal. I put it ter yer, Miss, serposin' you ain't on the Bleck List yerself an' you meets a pal in the street wot is, an' she sez ter yer, 'I'm on the Bleck List,' she sez, 'buy us a bottle o' Bass, ole gal,—are you goin' ter refuse 'er? O' *corse* you ain't. Not you. Why it ain't English.—Give us a song, BERTIE. You ask 'im, Miss, I see it's you 'e's a-mashin'. Why 'e's carryin' yer little tootsie-cases for yer. Wot oh, BERTIE!"

I have never seen a sheep scarlet with confusion before, but I know now what it would look like under these circumstances. Pince-Nez is struggling between indignation, fear, and a desire to appear pre-occupied.

"Let's 'ave the chorus agine," remarks the oily man cheerfully. "Narthen, boys an' gals—*orl* together:—"

"We're *orl* on the booze on the tiddley hi till—"

'Ere, ullo! Turn'll Pawk?"

He rises hastily, and seizing his bundle, stumbles over the Dazed Sheep's legs out on to the platform, then puts his head in at the window.

"So long, CHAWLEY. Keep a-mashin' of 'er, BERTIE. Once more, boys an' gals!"

"We're orl on the booze on the tiddley hi till Monday, We won't be at 'ome with the missis an' the kids on Sunday——"

The train has moved on, leaving the oily man on the platform, beating time and waving farewells alternately with the dented bowler hat. His song grows fainter and fainter, then is merged in the rattle of the train. The quartet are painfully subdued. Pince-Nez is the first to speak.

"I had half a mind," he declares, "to chuck the fellow out at the first station."

"Ah, that's just the point," puts in the Dazed Sheep; "but the question is—are you allowed to do it? How does the law stand?"

"That's just what I was thinking," avers Pince-Nez, and, the ladies being silent, the pair enter upon a highly technical legal discussion, in which each party is most conscientiously precise in putting the other right on the remoter details of hypothetical side issues.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

In *The Arcadians*, by J. S. FLETCHER (JOHN LONG), the freshness of the idea and the quaintness of the style are, at first, fascinatingly amusing. Had this series of chapters that set forth the slight story been contained within a limit very little in excess of that allowed to *The Wee Macgregor*, its success would never for a moment have been imperilled. As it is, however, the freshness gradually wears off, even the absurd nomenclature of the characters becomes wearisome affectation, and the bloom is no longer on the rye.

As throwing light on the Boer side of the war in South Africa, better far than some bulkier tomes is a little volume just published by FISHER UNWIN. *A Woman's Wanderings During the Anglo-Boer War* is its title, almost as lengthy as the average trek. The writer is quaintly presented as Mrs. General DE LA REY, as who should say Lady General ROBERTS or Lady General IAN HAMILTON. In a narrative that is a model of simplicity the writer always refers to her burgher husband as General DE LA REY. Mrs. General happily does not attempt to write a book. She just jots down what she saw and what at the moment she thought. For twenty months she and her brood were in flight, with METHUEN'S Khakis, as the Boers called the English, ever thundering at their heels. It is curious to note how little she knows of the trend of events over the wide battlefield. Few incidents of the campaign struck *nous autres* more sharply than DE LA REY's swoop down on METHUEN'S little army, routing them and capturing their wounded General. Mrs. DE LA REY makes very little of an astounding event over which Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL jubilantly chuckled in the hearing of a pained House of Commons. What she does mention is her afternoon call upon the wounded foe, and her friendly conversation. "I had a fat chicken killed," she writes, "and I took some biscuits and sent them with the chicken to the wounded lord." A fat chicken, look you. Nothing less for the pitiless hunter whom the much-entreated Lord had finally delivered into the hands of the burgher. A homely, cheerful, hopeful, resourceful woman is Mrs. General, whom my Baronite warmly commends to the personal knowledge of people who watched the War from afar.

The Occasional Assistant Baronite has just read two interesting books by an American humourist, yeapt ALFRED HENRY LEWIS, and entitled *Wolfville* and *Wolfville Days*



MORE SIGNS OF A COMING SPRING.

(ISBISTER), and is more than ever convinced that the humour of one country is not always that of another. It is many a long year since the late BRET HARTE took two continents by storm with the pathos and drollery of *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, and other tales singularly rich in local colouring, whose lingo was sufficiently evident to amuse without wearying. Now the fault with Mr. LEWIS'S tales of Far West life is that there is a little too much dialect and not enough descriptive matter in sound everyday English. None the less, these reminiscences of an "Old Cattleman of Arizona" are very bright, very original, and, in a sense, even valuable, as giving us a vivid picture of a kind of nomadic existence often talked about but very rarely experienced. Both volumes abound in humour of an original sort, and will doubtless meet with as much success in the Old World as they have in the New. But, frankly, we would prefer not having to turn so often to an interpreter—otherwise a Glossary—to make things clear.

Semi-Society, by FRANK RICHARDSON (CHATTO AND WINDUS), is a cleverly-written story of a "set" in what the author terms "semi-society." The characters, all carefully drawn in black and white, black predominating, are suggestively representative of types familiar to the up-to-date man about town. The final strong sensation scene is well led up to.

The variety of subjects treated by many differing writers in Mr. JAMES KNOWLES'S *Nineteenth Century and After* ("and after" is delicious—what is it after?) for this month ought to attract any number of differing readers. Even a GALLIO, who "cares for none of these things" that arouse Lord HALIFAX and Lady WIMBORNE, will be anxious to know what Mr. HENRY ARTHUR JONES may have to say about "Literary Critics and the Drama," likewise how Sir WEMYSS REID regards the doings of "Last Month," and what may be Mr. KEIR HARDIE'S opinions on "the Independent Labour Party." An article on "The Novels of Peacock," by HERBERT PAUL, has specially attracted the attention of

THE BARON DE B.-W.

A Drastic Remedy.

THE *Daily Mail* publishes the following advertisement, from which we feel compelled, by courtesy, to omit the name of the inventor and his apparently murderous drug:—

REMEMBER THIS TO-DAY: no one can sleep or rest where there is the painful noise of whooping cough, most of all the child. Give it ——— and it vanishes.

(The italics are our own, not the poor child's.)

A "BEAU IDÉAL" AT THE HAYMARKET.

COLMAN and GARRICK's comedy entitled *The Clandestine Marriage*, the authorship of which a good many well-informed people, being asked offhand, would attribute to SHERIDAN, is a curiosity, not a classic. It owes its survival as a possible attraction to the character of *Lord Ogleby*, which, originally intended by GARRICK as a part for himself, offers rare opportunities to any distinguished comedian following in the line of KING and FARREN. Other actors who have attempted the part "were," according to DAVISON's "remarks," which preface the published play, "but futile fellows." No wonder then that so perfect a comedian, and one so specially good in "character parts," as Mr. CYRIL MAUDE, should have chosen to revive *The Clandestine Marriage* at the Haymarket, and that his partner in the management, Mr. FRED. HARRISON, should have been in accord with him.

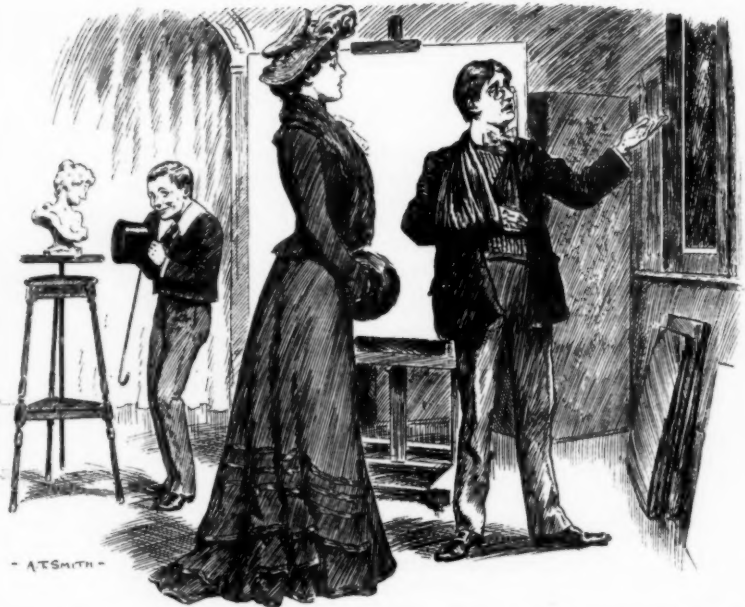
This comedy, which in its plot is inferior to GOLDSMITH's *She Stoops to Conquer* (a "farce," as Dr. JOHNSON described it), and hardly worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with even SHERIDAN's *Trip to Scarborough*, possesses a few scenes as dear to the good actor as they are delightful to an appreciative audience. Such are those where *Lord Ogleby* appears with *Canton*, his valet; and others in which the vulgarity and snobbishness of *Sterling* and his rich sister, *Mrs. Heidelberg* (not the *Old Heidelberg*, by kind permission of Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER), and the shrewishness of *Miss Sterling*, are dramatically contrasted with the gentlemanly tone of *Melville*, the quiet earnestness of *Lovewell*, and the placid sweetness of the somewhat too demure *Fanny* who is the real heroine of *The Clandestine Marriage*.

The last scene of all, where everyone is in night-dress and dressing-gown, save the clandestinely married couple and their lady's-maid, belongs to the realm of broad farce, and in a modern "comedy" would not be tolerated, unless the comedy were announced in the bills as "farical."

The acting at the Haymarket is as nearly perfect as it can be, though the *Sir John Melville* and the *Lovewell* of Mr. ALLAN AYNESWORTH and Mr. C. M. HALLARD are rather out of the old picture, savouring too much of the young man of the most modern up-to-date comedy.

The Swiss valet (this sounds picturesque) of Mr. ERIC LEWIS is delightful. It is quite a fresh character; he is the most cheerful, the most imperturbable butt for his master's paltry witticisms, the most companionable creature, the most perfect superior attendant, without being a "gentleman's gentleman," that a nobleman like *milord Ogleby* could possibly have found.

And Mr. CYRIL MAUDE's *Lord Ogleby*! Could it be improved upon?—in no particular that I am aware of. His manner, his grand manner—grand in spite of his having been intended by nature to be a *petit maitre*—is perfect. His ailments are not overdone: we do not laugh at his grievances because they are evidence of his real suffering, wilfully incurred, it is true, for which we are angry with his lordship; but his real buoyancy, the buoyancy of animal spirits resulting from a naturally good constitution, keeps him alive. What is it that constitutes this ancient beau a



Mr. Fullwig (who prides himself on, amongst other things, his "ambidexterity"). "Ah, MY DEAR MISS MAUD, NOT MANY—IF ANY—ARTISTS COULD DO AS I HAVE DONE. WHEN I SPRAINED MY RIGHT WRIST I PAINTED THIS PICTURE ENTIRELY WITH MY LEFT HAND."

Miss Maud. "REALLY—AH—UM—BUT WOULDN'T IT HAVE BEEN MUCH BETTER—IF YOU HAD GIVEN YOURSELF A COMPLETE REST?"

[Delight of Miss M.'s young brother, who "can't stand that Fullwig at any price."]

general favourite with all those among the public who have the opportunity afforded them of making his acquaintance?—why, his really generous disposition, and the kind instincts of the true gentleman he would have been but for his overweening, yet harmless, vanity.

Mrs. CHARLES CALVERT does her very best with Mrs. *Heidelberg*, but this *Alt Heidelberg* is not a patch (powder included) on Mrs. *Malaprop* whom she preceded by about ten years. Miss JESSIE BATEMAN is a very charming *Fanny*, a colourless character, but deliciously painted; and Miss BEATRICE FERRAR, at high pressure as *Miss Sterling*, gives an importance to a part that, as far as I am aware, has never been previously attained. Mr. LIONEL RIGNOLD's *Sterling* is a broadly-humorous, strongly-coloured portrait of a vulgar millionaire.

Mr. JOSEPH HARKER's scenery, especially that of the garden with its winding paths, is a most perfect framework to the action.

But, apart from any other consideration, the *Lord Ogleby* of Mr. CYRIL MAUDE ought to attract all playgoers, and secure for the old piece such a new success as, on its dramatic or literary merits, it could not possibly have achieved.

MARCH AND MANTALINI.

[The closing days of March were attended with furious gales, and storms of hail and rain, throughout the country.]

Oh, turbulent March! your traditional claim

This year was a fraud and a sham,

For though we believed you were playing the game,

When a month ago "in like a lion" you came—

You went out like a "demmed savage lamb."

AN optimist is a man who always makes the best of bad luck—when it is another fellow's.